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What Changes Should There Be Within Our Political Parties?

Moderator, QUINCY HOWE

S p e a k e r s

SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN

HENRY J. TAYLOR

NORMAN THOMAS



—COMING—

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What Next in the Middle East?

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THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

HENRY J. TAYLOR—Author, foreign correspondent and commentator for the American Broadcasting Company. After this Chicago-born (1902) journalist completed his education at the University of Virginia in 1918, he joined the staff of the *Kansas City Journal*. While working as a reporter, he continued studies in economics and government. A few years later he entered business, first building up a corn products company and then his own paper and pulp company. During this period Mr. Taylor's post-graduate studies and writing in economics established him as an author and lecturer of note. By the time World War II broke out, his reputation was secure and he became an ace war correspondent. Since V-J Day, Mr. Taylor has made many trips of observation to Europe and the Far East.

NORMAN THOMAS—Socialist leader and six-time Presidential candidate. A former Presbyterian minister, Mr. Thomas is one of the founders of the Civil Liberties Union and has taken part in many free speech fights and other struggles in support of the rights of workers to organize. He is a member of the Socialist Party's National Executive Committee, a founder and contributing editor to *The Call*, official publication of the Party. He is a frequent radio speaker and the author of many articles and books, the most recent *A Socialist's Faith* (1951). Last year Mr. Thomas went to India as a delegate to the Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom. He has recently returned from a tour of the Far East.

JUDGE SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN—Presidential advisor, former Justice of the New York Supreme Court. Judge Rosenman was born 56 years ago in Texas, was educated at Columbia University and admitted to the New York bar in 1920. He served New York State as a member of the Legislature (1922-26), bill drafting commissioner (1927-28), Counsel to Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt (1929-32) and Justice of the Supreme Court (1932-43). He resigned from the bench to become Special Counsel to the late President Roosevelt in 1943. Judge Rosenman remained as Special Counsel to President Truman until 1946, and has continued to serve unofficially as an advisor.

Moderator: QUINCY HOWE—ABC radio commenantor; Associate Professor of Journalism, University of Illinois.

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What Changes Should There Be Within Our Political Parties?

Moderator Howe:

It's going to take all our time, and more, for each of our three speakers to say all he wants to say on the topic of the evening, "What Changes Should There Be Within Our Political Parties?" I'm therefore going to ask each speaker to sound off for not more than a minute on just one or two changes that seem to him most urgently needed.

Now first we will hear from a lifelong Democrat, a former member of the New York State Legislature, a former Justice of the New York Supreme Court, then special counsel to both President Roosevelt and President Truman, and author of the newly published book, *Working With Roosevelt*—Judge Samuel I. Rosenman.

Judge Rosenman: Mr. Howe, I'm one of those who believe that changes are occurring in our political parties today—changes through evolution, rather than by drastic change, and they are changes that I view with great satisfaction. The conventions in Chicago held last month typified those changes—the gradual changes within the parties—and I'd like to talk about those later in the program.

The one change that I think is perhaps most important today is a change in the Congressional responsibility for legislation.

The President—the head of the party, the Chief Executor of the Nation—today has substantial responsibility for the legislative program. He recommends legislation. He follows the party platform more often than not, and failure of legislation generally is laid at his door.

The fact is, however, that legis-

lation is not passed by him, but passed by the Congress, and I think that the most desirable change immediately for parties is the establishment of a responsible party organization in the Congress.

By that I mean a group in the Congress speaking for the party, responsible particularly for the chairmen of the different committees. I think legislation in the past decade has met its defeat principally through the actions of chairmen of parties, and I would like to see some system of party responsibility involving changes in the methods of electing committee chairmen.

Mr. Howe: Thank you, Judge Rosenman, and now our next speaker wears no party label. He is a former newspaper reporter who turned businessman, then became a war correspondent, now an outstanding radio commentator on the ABC network. He is an economist and a champion of free enterprise—Henry J. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: Well, it seems to me that our great country has been blessed by having been saved from either of two extremes by having our two-party system. We've avoided the one party system, which is tyranny, and we've also avoided the other extreme of the splinter parties like in France, where you can't have a coordinated decision because there are so many compromises.

Now I think that in our country it is absolutely essential that there be two parties, both strong and virile; and I think the differences between them should be clear-cut and unmistakable and each should compete with the other in pro-

viding good government, because certainly history shows that nothing, absolutely nothing needs competition as much as government parties.

Both these parties are faced, it seems to me, by certain realities. And when you elevate this conversation to philosophical questions, I do question whether in either party the thinking that is being done is so much along basic philosophical lines, or whether the realignments that are being made are along basic philosophical lines as much as there has been a change in ideas about how to get votes.

In the Democratic party whose convention I attended in Chicago, I all but saw the state of Virginia run out of that convention. It was openly stated that there was a large faction of the Democratic party that would like to rule the South out of the Democratic party, and reorganize the committees in Congress without the Southern senior members.

Now the Republican cleavage is of quite a different nature, it seems to me, and it was personified chiefly by the rivalry between two candidates. I don't think that these changes are in the same area in the Democratic party today or in the Republican party.

Mr. Howe:

Thank you, Mr. Taylor.

Finally, one of Town Hall's oldest and best friends—six-time presidential candidate for the Socialist party, Norman Thomas.

Mr. Thomas: Let's begin by facing certain facts. Under our Constitution and under our set of customs, there is no question that this is and will have to be a two-party country. Never in my life did I run to create a third party. I ran in the hope of setting in mo-

tion forces which would realign the party division.

I fully agree that multiplicity of parties is not good, especially under the conditions in America.

To a certain extent it's a good thing, probably, that our parties are coalitions rather than parties in the technical sense, bound together by principle. That is to say, I do not think in a country that you can have too rigid requirements of agreement in advance, but I do think you need principles to divide parties, instead of mere desire for office.

I think it is fantastically wrong that the Democratic party should include, for instance, Hubert Humphrey and Herman Talmadge of Georgia. They stand for completely opposite ideas.

You have seen in the last four years the nearly total failure of the Democrats to carry out their platform because of the lack of responsibility of which Judge Rosenman spoke. But you can't, Judge Rosenman, get the responsibility you want unless you get a different idea among the mass of the people and a realignment of parties which has something to do somewhere with principle, and it's that kind of thing that I think is necessary.

If you want to know how necessary it is, look at the cynicism now in America, about political parties and even political leaders. Think, that with all the excitement in the campaign of 1948, only 51% of our people voted for President. And one reason is because of this cynical notion: It doesn't matter.

The Democratic Convention saw no fight on the platform because the Southerners knew they didn't have to pay any respect to the platform. That's wrong, and ought

to be changed, even if it takes a while.

Mr. Howe: Well now, Judge Rosenman, there were several remarks that Norman Thomas made about the Democrats. I think you ought to speak first.

Mr. Thomas: I'm not discriminating against the Republicans. I think their Convention was much worse.

Judge Rosenman: I'm glad to hear that remark from an impartial observer, such as Mr. Thomas is.

I happen to believe that there isn't so much cynicism about parties. I think one of the great things which President Roosevelt did during his lifetime was to emphasize and educate the American public into the necessity of party responsibility and to the necessity of a two-party system. I think that while we don't have Mr. Humphrey thinking the same as Mr. Talmadge . . .

Mr. Thomas: You have Mr. Talmadge thinking? (*applause*)

Mr. Taylor: Now, Norman, I'll have to interrupt you there a minute. I don't know whether Mr. Talmadge is thinking or whether he isn't, but I can assure you that he thinks he's thinking, and for that reason he is entitled to think as he pleases in our free country. (*applause*)

Mr. Thomas: He may be entitled to be a Democrat, in the same company as Judge Rosenman?

Mr. Taylor: I say that that is up to Judge Rosenman, and Mr. Talmadge. It is frankly none of your business.

Mr. Thomas: No, the American people have a tradition of how

politics ought to go. It still defies common sense to say that parties ought to try to hold together opposites in matters of civil rights and other common principles. (*applause*)

Judge Rosenman: I feel that it is everybody's business as to how Mr. Talmadge is thinking, because Mr. Talmadge some day may go to the national capital where his voice will determine what everybody has to endure in the way of legislation. I think that while we haven't got Mr. Talmadge thinking or not thinking, or representing the same point of view as Mr. Humphrey, the one thing that has happened in Chicago—and I'm speaking for my party, the Democratic party—the one thing that has happened is that the people who used to think like Mr. Talmadge many years ago are gradually beginning to think more and more like Mr. Humphrey. I think that that was typified by the fact that the platform passed with a very strong civil rights plank without any opposition, spoken opposition, from the floor from any Southerner.

I think it is also shown by the fact that while the liberals in the convention with their left jabbed at the Southerners in the platform and in the loyalty pledge, so-called, etc., with their right hand the Northern liberals drew unto themselves a great liberal from the South—Senator Sparkman.

And I think as long as we keep hitting the South for being too conservative, and at the same time rewarding Southern liberals and drawing them unto ourselves—and I'm speaking for ourselves, being the Northern liberals—I think that as long as we do that, the two divergent views of the Democratic party will come closer together,

and I think that's better than getting a pattern of completely similar thinking all through the party.

Mr. Taylor: Well, Judge, wait a minute here. Would you say that requiring a loyalty pledge was the hallmark of liberalism? Isn't it a curious coincidence that these very same people that were making such a commotion that you and I saw out there about a loyalty pledge to the Democratic party have been fighting tooth and nail the idea of giving — requiring — loyalty pledges from sensitive people in the United States Government?

Judge Rosenman: Well, I think, Mr. Taylor, you must realize that the loyalty pledge is a misnomer as applied to the Democratic convention. I used the phrase because that's the phrase you journalists use, but . . .

Mr. Taylor: It was given by Mr. Williams.

Judge Rosenman: The pledge is merely a statement that the delegates to that convention would be bound by the majority so far as using their best efforts to seeing that the candidates of Chicago were put on the local state tickets. Now I think that's the essence of Democratic liberalism.

Mr. Taylor: They broke down on that, Judge. They didn't go through with that. They watered down the thing to the point where — you speak of civil liberties plank — my understanding of the last caucus was that that went out the window.

Judge Rosenman: But that had nothing to do with the pledge.

Mr. Taylor: Well, the pledge and the civil liberties program were tied in absolutely together.

Judge Rosenman: Well, I'm sorry. The pledge had to do only with candidates.

Mr. Taylor: Sure, but that was the reload on the civil liberties approach.

Judge Rosenman: Well, the actual pledge, the assurance pledge, had to do only with candidates, and I think that it's the essence of democracy and liberalism for the majority to bind the minority.

Mr. Taylor: Well, when a party has reached the point where they've got to ask a loyalty pledge of their own delegates to support the candidates that they're going to choose, then I think you've got a real cleavage. (*applause*)

Mr. Thomas: Well, I also was at both conventions, and I don't know about that. I was very interested in the way the liberals kind of got out-manuevered in the Democratic convention on certain matters, but that's of the past and isn't, after all, too important. In a confused way, I'll agree with Judge Rosenman that some progress has been made in the Democratic party and in the South. I don't want anyone who hears me either in New York or over the radio to think I am anti-Southern.

It takes lots more courage and liberalism to be liberal in the South than in the North, and the spirit is growing. But in order that it should grow properly, there has to be an end to this Solid South business. What I, as above the battle, would like to have seen happen in Chicago was the kind of split which would make shivers shiver in the Republican party instead of the Democratic party.

Mr. Taylor: Well, now wait a minute, Norman. I come from the

University of Virginia and believe me, a lot of people down South would like to see an end to this Solid North bossism in the big cities, too, and they haven't got much use for Jack Arvey.

Mr. Thomas: Oh, solid North bossism! Did you ever here of Philadelphia?

Mr. Taylor: Look, the South has always been told by the North what it's got to do. Now those folks down there have got some ideas of their own, and I keep hearing about liberals. I'm enough of a liberal, because I believe I'm a liberal to say that that ought to be pretty much up to the South to decide, and that's why we've got states in the first place.

Mr. Thomas: Henry, if you're a liberal we need some new definitions in my opinion. (*applause*)

Mr. Taylor: Well, I'll tell you how I would define a liberal, and let's see if this lives up to it.

Mr. Thomas: Okay.

Mr. Taylor: I think a man is a liberal who believes that one man's liberty ends where another one's begins, and one of the distinctive features of the professional liberals that I know is that they are always spending their time planning other people's lives and telling them what they have to do.

Mr. Thomas: All of this is interesting, and like a great many nice sounding phrases, it isn't near as good as it sounds, as I could just demonstrate if it wasn't off the subject.

Mr. Taylor: Norman, you've been a socialist, and you've been planning and you've been the leader and leading people.

Mr. Thomas: Look, if you believe in liberalism, you believe that my right to speak begins now.

What I am saying is this. There is no such thing as carrying on a responsible democracy without responsible parties. Party responsibility does not mean dictatorial control of every party, or the conscience of the men in it. But it does mean large general agreement.

Now toward those large general agreements there has been some progress, even in the Democratic party, as I admit but that progress has not been uniform and it would make sense or righteousness if you had a two-party system where people who didn't hate the civil rights program and other things in the Democratic platform didn't consider that they were the Democrats.

And while I admire progress in the South, it isn't all progress. I regard it as one of the black pages in American history that in the campaign of 1950 two senators, one from Florida and one from North Carolina—North Carolina has been one of our better states—won by a very base appeal, if not of themselves, of their supporters, to race feeling. The way in which Frank Graham, one of the finest of Americans, was defeated in North Carolina was disgraceful, but Willis Smith who did it, or in whose behalf it was done, sits in the seat of the mighty in the Democratic party — all of whose protestations under Roosevelt and Truman he denies.

I do not think it makes sense to insist that that's liberty or liberalism. That is a confusion which throws people off which makes it almost impossible to have honest discussion. It has been something close to tragedy that for the last four years liberalism has been so weak, while McCarran bills and all sorts of bills have passed, and

one reason is precisely because the Democratic party does not feel in the least bound by its own platforms in regard to the Solid South.

Mr. Howe: How about that, Judge Rosenman, as a Democrat?

Judge Rosenman: Well, I agree with a great deal of what Mr. Thomas has said. I do want to take issue with him, though, on his statement that the liberals were outmaneuvered at the convention last month. I've witnessed a great many Democratic conventions, and when I think of the old conventions when the Northern Democrats were afraid of a split in their party, afraid that Pat and Ed Smith, for example, would walk out if Negroes were treated with any respect, when I think of the great transition which has occurred from that to 1952, I am greatly heartened that the Democratic party is moving toward greater solidarity. For example, who could have ever have predicted even a year ago that at Chicago we could have adopted a very strong civil rights platform which calls for federal action, that we could have enacted a pledge from the Southern states that they would support the candidates nominated at the convention, and above all, that we could have seen Virginia and Louisiana and South Carolina instead of walking out as they would have done four years ago or, I think, a year ago, literally begging and maneuvering to stay in that convention—I think the Democratic party is to be greatly congratulated on assuming a greater solidarity and a greater unity than it ever had before.

Mr. Taylor: Well, Judge, the state of Virginia certainly wasn't begging to stay in that convention. What really happened was, as you

know, that they started to throw them out and then they thought it would be awful bad publicity across the United States and they passed some fast signals and got them voted back in by the vote in the change of the state of Illinois.

Judge Rosenman: I remember very distinctly watching my television screen and seeing Governor Battle up there making quite an eloquent plea as to why he should stay in.

Mr. Taylor: He was urging the Democratic party not to cut its own throat, and a wise thing he was urging, believe me.

Judge Rosenman: What he was urging was that Virginia delegation be allowed to stay in, and he said . . .

Mr. Taylor: And he said, "If you don't, General Eisenhower's going to win our state." He may win it yet. (*applause*)

Mr. Thomas: Just a remark. Whether Eisenhower or Stevenson wins, it would be better in the long run for America if those Democrats who were far closer to the Republicans weren't in the party, then there'd be more voting in the South and more voting in the North, if that could be brought to pass. We're making progress, but not fast enough in this connection.

Besides, Judge Rosenman, your boast of progress you confine too exclusively to the Democratic party. I've lived a long time, and the other day I was stopped in the street by a prominent New York Republican leader who shall be nameless. He shook hands with me. Republicans do that from time to time. He said, "you know, I saw you at the convention, etc.," and he said, "you know, you're getting

very conservative. We right-wing Republicans had to write planks in our platform that were only in your platform in 1928."

Yes, they weren't even in the Democratic platform in 1932, Judge Rosenman. You know what you did with our platform at that time. Well, that's enough. In other words, progress hasn't passed over the Republicans.

Judge Rosenman: Well, I sort of let the Republican party to Mr. Taylor, although he disclaims party allegiance, but I think the Republican party, too, has shown an indication that it's moving along with the times. I think the fact that Eisenhower was nominated, that people like Lodge and the other Republicans like Saltonstall, who went along with them, are indicative of the fact that a newer force is taking over the Republican party, and I for one am delighted that it is, because I think it shows progress moving with the times.

Mr. Thomas: Except that General Eisenhower, insofar as he is informed at all on domestic issues, is well to the right of Senator Taft at the present writing.

Mr. Taylor: Oh, now wait a minute, Norman. That's a clever remark but of course it isn't true, and as far as that's concerned, in speaking my own case, I think that Senator Taft has been without any question the most able senator we've had in many, many years in the United States. We've had some fine men in both parties, and I don't like to see mud thrown at either one of them.

Mr. Thomas: I was throwing no mud. Since when is it throwing mud to describe a man as to the right, especially to you, Henry Taylor?

Mr. Taylor: Well, coming from you, Norman, coming from you the word "right" is an indictment.

Mr. Thomas: Look, words have meaning, no matter who utters them, which is one of the things you ought to remember in conversations like this, and what I was saying is that in the common use of the word "right," General Eisenhower is to the right of Taft, who in a debate that I once had with a real estate man in one of the Michigan cities—was described as a socialist—Taft, I mean—because of his support of housing, a support that Eisenhower hasn't given.

I'll say some good words for Taft because I am above the battle, and I'll say some good words for Eisenhower, only I wish that Eisenhower would learn more facts about the American government than he knows at present.

Mr. Howe: I think it would be worth while, Henry, if you would say a few words about the Republican convention—we've heard a lot about the Democratic convention—and how this Republican party strikes you at this time, a couple of weeks after its convention terminated. How are they shaping up in terms of these changes that may be needed to give new vitality to our parties?

Mr. Taylor: Well, it does seem to me, Quincy, that you always have a fundamental difference between a convention of a party in power and a convention of a party not in power, especially when the party has not been in power for many years. The nucleus of the office-holders in the Republican party that were prominent at the Republican convention were the governors of the states. There you had crystal-clear rivalry between

the supporters of Senator Taft and the supporters of General Eisenhower which gave it great drama.

But basically you had an amazingly little difference in view, and that's frequently true of parties that are not in power, because they realize that they are an association of people who have not been committed in the national picture, and because of their anxiety to concentrate on the single goal, which is victory.

The cleavage in the Republican party in my opinion was never before or after the convention anything like as deep as it seems to have been presented to the people, and it certainly is not today; and I don't believe that it compares with what I witnessed in Philadelphia in 1948 when the Dixiecrats walked out, or with the fundamental differences in the Democratic party, the structural nature, having to do with the North and South conflict.

Mr. Howe: Mr. Thomas, do you want to say a final word?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, I want to say that I think the cleavage is very

deep. I have met around America—and I have traveled—more Taftites that are going fishing than I have met for a long time. Moreover the reason why they didn't quarrel on issues was that the Republican platform was so written that you could quote one sentence one side and the other sentence the other side.

Furthermore, I'd like to say that the person who won the Republican convention for Eisenhower was old Doc Gallup and his polls. A majority of the convention would have preferred Taft in his personality and his record, but they were persuaded that Eisenhower would win, and what is anything to a Republican compared to winning?

Mr. Taylor: As a matter of fact, Norman, on the basis of the Gallup polls, the majority of the American people would have preferred Kefauver, and the poll taken among 1375 Democratic county chairmen, many of whom were delegates in Chicago, was a 2 to 1 runaway for Stevenson.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Howe: Well, now, gentlemen, let's get on to some of the questions now from the audience. And here is the first question on this subject of the evening about what changes are needed in our political parties.

Lady: Well, this question is directed to Judge Rosenman. How can we nominate a people's choice, when each party is guilty of putting in what they call a native son just to control the vote? Now, Mr. Truman knew that Mr. Steven-

son would be nominated before he ever left Washington. Should this not be changed—our way of nominating our presidents?

Judge Rosenman: Well, I think that the democratic process requires each state to have its choice. I don't think it's true that Mr. Truman knew from the very beginning that Stevenson was to be the nominee. As a matter of fact, his first choice, as you know, was Senator Barkley and he so advised his alternate to vote. I don't see

how you could — or that you should—prevent a state from entering the favorite son in a convention. It seems to me that every state ought to be allowed to advance its own son or anyone else if it wants to.

Mr. Howe: I think the lady has another little addendum to put on her question.

Lady: Must they throw the vote to this other party? They could put the largest vote, electoral vote, to this party and they know that they can control the votes.

Judge Rosenman: Well, theoretically, at least, they don't throw the vote. The delegates decide to vote that way. Now it so happens that generally the favorite son is the political leader, and I think as a part of political responsibilities, the powers of political leaders are necessary. Perhaps they are necessary evils, but I think you can't have party responsibility without party leaders.

Mr. Howe: Thank you, Judge Rosenman. The next question is for Mr. Taylor.

Man: Mr. Taylor, why should there be any changes in your land and mine when the Democratic administration in the last 20 years has made our country prosperous as never before?

Mr. Taylor: Was that question heard on the air?

Mr. Howe: Yes, I think that was heard.

Mr. Taylor: Well, now, of course I would like to differ basically with the whole approach that government is responsible for the development of a nation. You know, the people have something to do about it—the way they work, the way they save, the things they invent, and what they do. It's curious that when things are good, governments have a habit of attributing the good

things to themselves; and when depressions come, they blame it on business. (*Applause*)

Mr. Thomas: Well, I wanted to say that while I applaud a good deal of Democratic legislation, for obvious reasons, the historic fact is that we never have proved that we could conquer depression without war or without an arms economy, and our present economy to my intense concern is now of necessity—I'm not blaming anybody at the moment, except Stalin—is now of necessity an arms economy, which doesn't prove much about prosperity. I think we can make America a going concern without an arms economy, but we have not done it—neither Democrats nor Republicans nor anybody else.

May I refer to the preceding question and say that not believing it's a panacea, and knowing the difficulties, I nevertheless believe the time has come when there should be uniform primary laws all over the United States for the choice of presidential candidates.

Mr. Howe: Now, Judge Rosenman you wanted to say a word on this question of the prosperity of the Democrats.

Judge Rosenman: Yes, I think the gentleman's question is perhaps an eloquent answer to what I consider the unreasoned argument for Eisenhower's election this year to be that it's time for a change. And I think that the gentleman has pointed out that the American people don't think that it's time for a change, that they've had great prosperity, that they're enjoying great prosperity, that all of the laws which the Democratic administration has enacted have provided a sort of a shock against depression, and I think that there just isn't any

reason for saying it's time for a change except just that it's a catch phrase. (*Applause*)

Mr. Howe: Now Henry Taylor wanted to make one final comment.

Mr. Taylor: Well, as far as it being time for a change is concerned, I think the voting problem on that one is easy. I've gotten very suspicious about people being in any kind of political job too long. Frankly, if I were up on the moon and I came back to the United States, it wouldn't make any difference to me whether the Republicans were in or the Democrats were in. If somebody would say to me, "Well, Taylor, you've been away all these years. How do you know how to vote?"

I'd say, "How long have the people been in that are in there now?" And if they said 20 years, I'd say, "Just tell me the name of the other party."

Man: Mr. Thomas, hasn't today's anti-Communist hysteria caused people to refuse to sign leftist petitions? Haven't your own words contributed to this feeling, adversely affecting the interests of your own party now seeking to be placed on the ballot in New York? Don't you think it is time for one of our parties to take a strong stand on civil liberties?

Mr. Thomas: The answer to your question is mostly *no* and an emphatic *no*. I have written and said that it was regrettable that neither of the old party platforms had a ringing declaration of civil liberties. There's a lot that needs to be said that we haven't got time to say tonight, but if people are afraid to sign socialist petitions, it is not because of anything the government has done—it's because they ought to remem-

ber they have nothing to fear but fear.

I speak advisedly when I say that the greatest hindrance in America to liberty is an unwarranted fear of the people, and I say this who condemn a great many of the loyalty procedures, admitting that some are necessary, who condemn our passport rules, who condemn a lot of things that have happened; but I condemn most of all the cowardice of Americans for their desire to keep up with the Joneses and their disregard for dissent. For that, neither party is primarily responsible, though they may have contributed to it. We are responsible. I regret the absence of a civil liberties plank carefully thought out in either party's platform except as applied to civil rights, and the civil rights plank in the Democratic party platform is pretty good.

Man: Judge Rosenman, what forces were behind the Willkie-Roosevelt coalition mentioned in your book—by that I mean what party and so forth were behind it?

Judge Rosenman: Well, I think if you look at the history of what President Roosevelt went through, he had come to the conclusion by 1944 that the way to enact an immediate liberal program such as he was proposing and a program which received its first rebuff from the Supreme Court and then received a rebuff from the members of his own party whom he tried to purge in 1938—I think he finally came to the conclusion that the way to get a swift enactment of a completely liberal program was to realign the party, so that not only the leaders and legislators of both parties would be realigned with all of the liberals on one side and all of the

conservatives on the other side, but that the actual voters would be divided along the same lines, so that you would get one liberal party and one conservative party. And that was, I think, the motivating factor.

Mr. Howe: Thank you very much, Judge Rosenman, and I'm going to ask the speakers here to try to keep their answers a little shorter so that we can get more time for more questions. The next one is for Mr. Taylor.

Man: Since the Dixiecrats usually vote with the Republicans, wouldn't it clear the political atmosphere if the conservatives left the Democratic party and the few Republican liberals joined the Democratic party?

Mr. Taylor: Well, I am sure that it would be a healthy thing, as I attempted to say in the initial remarks, if we could get an orientation of the philosophies there—if you want to call them conservative and liberal — those are very difficult labels. But it does make me wonder why so many people talk about the Southern conservatives going some place else. The South is a one-party area. You either run on the Democratic ticket in the South or you're all alone on the telephone. There's no place to go.

Now one day, and this may be the beginning of it — General Eisenhower's popularity in many of the Southern states—one day it would certainly be a healthy thing if you could get two-party competition in the South. Meanwhile I think the subject is completely academic. On this point of prosperity, I spent my life in the matter of international economics, my friends, and one thing that is very often forgotten is that the government, but no government, is a source of wealth. Any-

thing that any government gives the people, it must first take from the people. (*Applause*)

Lady: Mr. Thomas, there is so much general public discussion and dissatisfaction over this present method, how do you think the general voting public should get more voice in selecting candidates, and by what method?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I've already argued for the necessity of a realignment of parties, for a genuine two-party system in the South, for a real reform in the Democratic party, which would have a corresponding effect on the Republican party. I have already said somewhat hesitantly that I believe in a presidential primary for the choice of the candidates with somewhat rigid controls on expenditures and certain other matters which I haven't time to discuss, but there is no royal road. People have got to wake up, and one trouble with the American people is that in forum after forum I am asked how can something happen, as if it was outside the people. Bad as our machinery is, if this audience really cared about the state of politics in New York, it would be amazing the difference it made. I doubt if we'd have some of the mayors we've had.

Man: Judge Rosenman, one reason the newspapers give for voting Republican is that a Democratic victory will mean the death of the two-party system. Is this a real issue of the coming campaign?

Judge Rosenman: I certainly don't think that it is. I don't think that the election of the Democratic party means the end of the Republican party. I think what it means is that the Republican party will have to become more liberal. I think that

the Republican party, in order to gain public support, will have to become realistic as to what's happening in 1952, and to realize that it is a liberal government and a liberal administration, liberal statutes as we've come to know them, which make for the prosperity of the people. And I think that will save the Republican party.

Mr. Howe: Thank you, Judge Rosenman, and now for Mr. Taylor.

Man: Mr. Taylor, what steps can the parties, both of them, take to give the vice-presidential candidate a more significant position in the government and thereby select people of much higher caliber for what should be the second most important position in our government?

Mr. Taylor: Well, I think that that's being attended to as best it can be by an administrative attitude. I think that it was very unfortunate that Mr. Truman had no part at all in the preparation of the government during the many years when these critical things were going on, and at the death of Mr. Roosevelt, Truman admittedly, as indicated in his book *Mr. President*, was completely uninformed, not alone about the particulars of the policy, but the actual negotiations made with Mr. Stalin. The vice-presidency is a precious office, I agree with you. I should think that rather than an explosive nomination, it should be done with great care. This year I think it was. I think that the vice-presidential candidates of both parties this year have recognition of the solemn nature of this choice as indicated by this question.

Mr. Howe: I think we have time for just about one more

question, one more minute, for Mr. Thomas.

Lady: Mr. Thomas, what principles should a political party advocate in order to build up strength against communism and retain our civil liberties at home?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I think in order to build up real strength ideologically against communism you have to have a better doctrine in the real interest of the people, as against dictatorship. That's why I am a socialist. I'm changing my mind in certain tactics, but not in my fundamental belief, and that I want a chance to go on record as saying. As for the vice presidents, all I've got to say about this year's choice is we could have done worse. I still believe we should all pray, "God save the president." (*Applause*)

Mr. Howe: One more question for Mr. Judge Rosenman.

Mr. Taylor: Well, wait a minute, Norman, I don't know whether you know Nixon or not, but he's a very very able man.

Mr. Howe: I think that will have to wind us up. Mr. Taylor got in a last little plug there for Richard Nixon.

Mr. Taylor: Well, he's got it coming to him. He's a fine man.

Mr. Thomas: Well, so's Sparkman, except in civil rights, which are very important exceptions. But I still say, "God save the President," for we wouldn't have nominated either of those men for president, I hope.

Mr. Howe: Well, thank you, Judge Rosenman, Norman Thomas, and Henry J. Taylor for your discussion of the changes you think our political parties need. So plan to be with us next week and every week at the sound of the Crier's Bell.

FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Background Questions

1. Is realignment of our political parties necessary? If so, why?
2. Is the purpose of party realignment to achieve an effective majority capable of decisive political action? Or is it a method of achieving specific ends relating to specific issues?
3. Are we going through a period of party realignment today?
 - a. If so, what form is this realignment taking?
 - b. Is it a movement of masses of individual voters shifting on the basis of fundamental interest, or is it a political maneuver lead by a few shrewd politicians?
4. Can there be a basic party realignment without a subconscious, emotional shifting of loyalties on the part of millions of voters? Is this taking place today?
5. The recent Democratic and Republican National Conventions revealed sharply divergent views within both major political parties.
 - a. Which split is more fundamental and more divisive?
 - b. At which convention was a more effective compromise of differences achieved?
6. Have the quarrels which split our parties been the result of great public issues or of the general breakdown of effective leadership?
7. Do the sharp differences within our parties weaken them? Or do they strengthen them by providing an opportunity to work out the broadest possible area of compromise consistent with effective political action?
8. Has the split in the Republican camp been effectively healed? Was the convention fight strictly over foreign policy, or was it for control of the national party?
9. What was the basis of the so-called Roosevelt Coalition? Is this coalition so weak today that it has lost its capacity for decisive political action? Or is it still an effective majority?
10. Has the North-South split in the Democratic camp been effectively healed?
 - a. Was the convention fight strictly a fight over civil rights, or was it for control of the national party and Congress?
 - b. Were there groups both among Northern Liberals and Southern diehards who had a vested interest in this struggle? Did these elements purposely seek a fight or was the struggle one that involved the entire party structure?
11. Would reading the Southern Democrats out of the party have provided the Democrats with a loyal national and congressional majority? Or would it have reduced them to a minority party?
12. Is the introduction of the two-party system in the South necessary for the political health of the nation?
 - a. Will it have the effect of nationalizing formerly sectional issues?
 - b. Will it give Southerners who are ideologically identified with the Republican Party a congenial political home?
 - c. Will it have the effect of encouraging young liberal Southerners to assert themselves politically?
13. What, in fact, is the proper function of a minority party?
 - a. Should it try to outbid the party in power?
 - b. Or should it seek to represent vigorous opposition which slows and moderates the actions of the majority?

BEHIND THE CRIER'S BELL



GONE ARE THE DAYS portrayed in "Of Thee I Sing" (circa 1930), when the U.S. Vice Presidency so lacked the serious regard of voters, it could serve as a butt for weird jokes, or worse still, simply not be noticed.

Today's politicians and citizens alike are fully aware of this Number 2 spot in the Administration. For the upcoming elections, delegates to both national conventions insisted upon running what they regard as strong and able Vice Presidential candidates, Senator John Sparkman of Alabama and Senator Richard Nixon of California.

But while the two Senators have racked up considerable fame locally, it has been argued that neither candidate is well known to the general public. Neither "can be certain of ready recognition on any main street," it was put recently by a leading political columnist.

This is a charge which prodded our curiosity. Just when, how often, in what connection, had these two candidates been available to "Town Meeting" listeners? A check through the records reveals some interesting data:

Both have presented their views from time to time, though Senator Sparkman has a distinct edge on number of appearances. Sparkman's participation goes back to October, 1942, when a Congressman, he debated lowering the draft age to eighteen.

Since then, on the "Town Meeting" platform, he has concerned himself with such questions as "Do We Really Elect Our Own President?" (April '47), "Should the President's Civil Rights Program Be Adopted?" (March '48), "Should the Senate Ratify the North Atlantic Pact?" (April '49), and "Is Government Stifling Free Enterprise?" (March '52).

Richard Nixon's bow on "Town Meeting" came in May, 1948, when with Senator Taft, Thurman Arnold and Ralph McGill he discussed, "How Should Democracy Deal with Groups Which Aim to Destroy Democracy?"

He appeared again in May '51 to argue a foreign policy issue, "How Can We End the War in Asia?" This time the opponent was none other than his colleague and (as he repeatedly stated) "good friend," Senator John J. Sparkman. Little could they guess at the time that "Town Meeting's" slogan, "Hear both sides, then make up your own mind" would come to have special pertinence for them, meeting in a broader debate fourteen months later.

Libraries, schools and other subscribers who have kept a permanent file of the Town Meeting Bulletin may be well rewarded for browsing through program texts of the above dates. Their candid statements—not given amid the pressures of a campaign year—are sure to help in getting to know the men who hold them.